

Message Text

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SUBJECT: OPPOSITION CIRTICIZES PREMIER'S ROLE IN BELIZE
NEGOTIATIONS

1. A FRONT PAGE ARTICLE ENTITLED QUOTE THE RIGHT TO KNOW
UNQUOTE IN THE JAN 28 ISSUE OF THE OFFICIAL UDP NEWSPAPER BEACON
IS INDICATIVE OF THE LINE PREMIER GEORGE PRICE'S OPPOSITION
IS TAKING IN REGARD TO THE RECENT LONDON TALKS ON THE BELIZE
DISPUTE.

2. FOLLOWING IS VERBATIM TEXT:

IT IS AN ACCEPTED PRINCIPLE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND
WORLD DIPLOMACY THAT DELICATE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN STATES MUST
OFTENTIMES BE KEPT TOP SECRET. AND THIS FOR OBVIOUS PRACTICAL
REASONS. IT TAKES NO UNDUE PERCEPTION TO RECOGNIZE THAT PREMATURE
DISCLOSURES CAN AFFECT THE ENTIRE NEGOTIATING PROCESS, OFTEN WITH
DISASTROUS RESULTS.

BUT THIS PRINCIPLE OF NON-DISCLOSURE IS NOT AN ABSOLUTE ONE.
BALANCED AGAINST IT IN A HIGHLY SENSITIVE INTERACTION, MUST BE
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THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE TO KNOW. THE TRUE PATRIOT-STATESMAN WILL
HAVE LITTLE DIFFICULTY IN PERCEIVING THAT THERE ARE TIMES WHEN
THE PRINCIPLE OF NON-DISCLOSURE MUST GIVE WAY TO THE PARAMOUNTCY
OF THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE TO KNOW.

THE QUINTESSENTIAL CASE IN POINT IS OF COURSE THE ONGOING
ANGLO-Guatemalan-BELIZE NEGOTIATIONS. TIME AND AGAIN THESE

NEGOTIATIONS HAVE REACHED CRISIS PROPORTIONS, AND THE FUTURE OF THIS COUNTRY HAS HUNG DANGEROUSLY IN THE BALANCE. YET THE PEOPLE OF BELIZE EVEN IN DESPERATE CIRCUMSTANCES LIKE THESE, HAVE BEEN DENIED THEIR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT TO KNOW. AND THIS AS A DIRECT CONSEQUENCE OF THE DUPLICITY AND LACK OF COURAGE OF GEORGE CADLE PRICE. IN THE FACE OF RUMOURS AT HOME, AND LEAKAGES TO THE PRESS ABROAD, GEORGE PRICE AND THE BRITISH, THROUGH THEIR LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE PETER MCENTEE, HAVE COMBINED IN A FAITHLESS CONSPIRACY TO DENY EVERYTHING; TO KEEP FROM THE PEOPLE CRITICAL DEVELOPMENTS THAT THREATEN OUR VERY SURVIVAL AS A NATION.

NOW HOWEVER, THINGS HAVE COME TO A HEAD. AN EXPOSE BY THE MANCHESTER GUARDIAN'S DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT, PROBING QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, AND THE OUTRAGE OF BRITISH PUBLIC OPINION, HAVE FORCED GEORGE PRICE AND THE BRITISH TO CONFIRM WHAT WE FEARED ALL ALONG. THE LATEST PROPOSALS ADVANCED BY THE BRITISH DO IN FACT CONTEMPLATE THE QUESTION OF, IN THEIR EUPHEMISTIC PHRASE, "LAND ADJUSTMENT." MR. CALLAGHAN'S HASTILY ADDED RIDER THAT NOTHING FINAL WILL BE DONE WITHOUT FIRST CONSULTING THE PEOPLE OF BELIZE, IS A TRANSPARENT PLOY, AIMED AT WHITEWASHING THE ENTIRE SORDID BRITISH POSITION.

AND GEORGE PRICE'S CLAIM OF SUCCESS IN HAVING EXTRACTED AN ASSURANCE FROM THE BRITISH THAT ANY PROPOSED SOLUTION MUST HAVE THE DIRECT APPROVAL OF THE BELIZEAN PEOPLE, IS HIS OWN ATTEMPT AT SAVING FACE. FROM THE MAN WHO WAS PARTY TO THE CONSPIRACY OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CONCEALMENT WHEN THE NOW INFAMOUS PROPOSALS WERE BEING HATCHED AND PROMULGATED, THIS IS MUCH TOO LITTLE MUCH TOO LATE.

THE PLAIN TRUTH IS THAT GEORGE PRICE IS NOW PROVEN TO HAVE BETRAYED THE TRUST OF THIS NATION AND GEORGE PRICE MUST BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE. HISTORY WILL SURELY CONDEMN THIS JUDAS, WHO EVEN AS HE CONSISTENTLY DENIED REPORTS OF LAND CESSION WAS A TACIT ACCOMPLICE IN THE BRITISH DESIGN TO PRESIDE OVER THE DISMEMBERMENT OF OUR NATIONAL TERRITORY.
END QUOTE

3. COMMENT. THIS ARTICLE IS ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE QUALITY OF PUBLIC DEBATE IN BELIZE ON AN ISSUE OF VITAL CONCERN TO THE COUNTRY. THE FACT THAT PREMIER PRICE, AFTER TAKING A CONSISTENTLY UNYIELDING POSITION ON THE QUESTION OF CEDING BELIZEAN LAND TO GUATEMALA, IS BEING ACCUSED BY THE OPPOSITION OF HAVING "BETRAYED THE TRUST OF THIS NATION" IS SUGGESTIVE OF THE SORT OF ABUSE THE PREMIER WOULD BE SUBJECTED TO WERE HE IN FACT TO ACQUIESCE SOME SORT OF CESSION PROPOSAL.
GAWF

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